TALE LITE

MV agencies help in search for missing children

New program announced at Rio Grande agency

Motor Vehicle Services is taking steps to help with the tragic situation of missing children in New Jersey.

Bulletin boards were recently installed at all motor vehicle agencies to display posters of missing children. Supplied by the state's law enforcement community, the posters have identifying information, a photo of the child and a phone number for MV customers to call if they have information to help find the child.

"People from all walks of life visit our motor vehicle agencies each day," MVS Director Skip Lee said. "Because we touch so many different people, we can increase the chances of bringing these children back to their families."

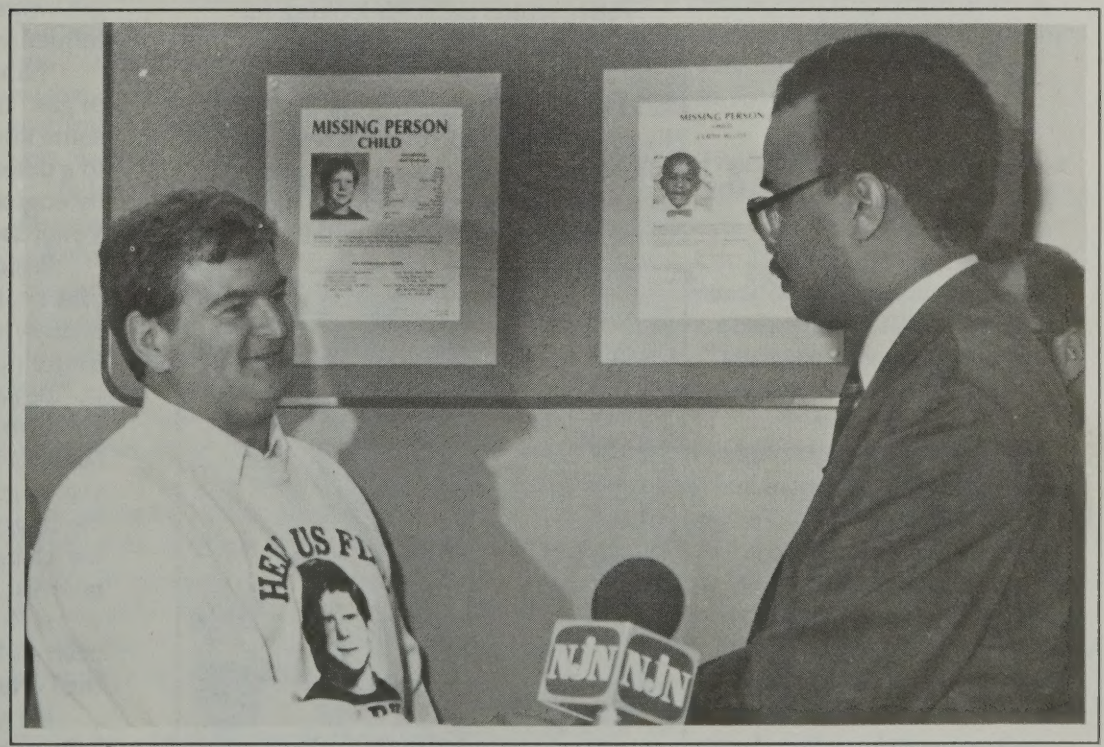
The idea to use MV agencies to display the missing children posters was developed by Rio Grande Motor Vehicle Agent Bob Hodges. Hodges is involved in many youth oriented programs in Cape May County and has been an active participant in the search for Mark Himebaugh, the 12-year-old Middle Township child missing since November 1991.

"I feel the grief and compassion for Mark, his family and all of the other missing children in New Jersey," Hodges said. "Perhaps this effort will be the catalyst that will help us bring Mark and all of these children home."

Director Lee, who announced the program with Hodges at the Rio Grande Agency in December, said that it was both a happy and sad day for the division.

"While Motor Vehicles is happy to serve as a conduit in the effort to find missing children, it's with great sadness that we must acknowledge the need for such programs," Director Lee said. "I look forward to the day when these children are home with their parents and all of the boards are empty."

Each poster will remain on the boards until that child is found.



Director Skip Lee welcomes Jody Himebaugh, father of Mark Himebaugh (seen in left photo on bulletin board in background) to a ceremony launching Motor Vehicle Services participation in a new program to help find missing children. Mark has been missing since November 1991.

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Motor Vehicle Services

Computer system upgrade completed at agencies

Motor Vehicle employees working at the state's 49 agencies are finding it a little easier to process transactions these days, thanks to a recently completed computer system upgrade.

Started in October, the upgrade allows a quicker transmittal of information to the mainframe computer system, located at the Office of Telecommunications and Information Systems (OTIS). With the combined hardware and software changes, information can now be sent directly to OTIS from the agencies, offering a faster, more efficient way to process license, registration and title transactions.

Ron Fuydal, Systems manager and a member of the team responsible for the project, explained that the work was done at the agencies after hours, so customers would not be inconvenienced.

"The key was to do this job at night so we wouldn't disrupt business," Fuydal said. "All of the work was done during the evening, so the system was up and ready to serve customers the next morning."

A special thanks to Ron Fuydal, and Liz Fruscione, Greg Calisti and Dennis Filidore, of Systems Management, for making the project a success.

PROFILE

Ted Vetter

It's almost time for Ted Vetter, Safety Specialist 2 at the Paramus Inspection Station, to lift anchor on the Lady G. From April to November, Vetter spends his weekends on his 20-foot boat (named after his wife, Georgianna) patrolling the Hudson River looking for boaters in distress.

A member of the U.S. Coast Guard Auxiliary since 1979, Vetter will hold a higher rank when he takes to the water this year. He was recently promoted to commander of the 30-member flotilla, based at the Hackensack Yacht Club.

Vetter scouts the river looking for trouble from the George Washington Bridge to Haverstraw Bay, south of the Bear Mountain Bridge near Stony Point. His vessel is equipped with a two-way radio to pick up distress signals and electronic equipment which can plot a course, pinpoint a location within 50 feet, and compute water depth and temperature.

"We always carry extra gas and life jackets on board and yards of special towline in keeping with Coast Guard regulations," Vetter said.

He's encountered boating problems such as mechanical failure, to taking on water, and running out of fuel. "Basically, we're on standby until we get a call for help," he said.

Trained in first aid and cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR), he is prepared to aid people who fall overboard, boats that get swamped, and boaters under the influence of alcohol or drugs.

"Nine times out of ten, people run out of gas. That's the biggest problem. Next is some kind of water leak, most likely due to a deteriorated hose, and this is followed by engine failure and electrical problems," Vetter said.

Besides patrol work, Vetter's flotilla offers safe boating courses to recreational boaters and free boat inspections. In 1992, Vetter inspected 260 boats.

Besides being a licensed boat captain, he's also a commercial pilot. Before he sold his 182 Cessna Skylane plane two years ago, he flew the "ice patrol," reporting large ice floes on the river and calling for ice breakers to clear the waterway for boaters.

A Korean War veteran, Vetter has been an MVS employee for five years at the Paramus Inspection Station.

He said his greatest enjoyment is helping people, whether on dry land at the inspection station, or on the water during a boating crisis.

New Jersey motorists benefit from new partnership

Motor Vehicle Services recently entered into a public/private business partnership with the New Jersey Automobile Dealers Assocation (NJADA) to establish a dealer-only motor vehicle agency.

Scheduled to open the week of February 16, NJADA will run the Ewing Township facility. It will offer motor vehicle services to buyers of new and used cars from dealers.

"Now there will be one facility designed just for dealers," MVS Director Skip Lee explained. "We can shorten waiting times at our remaining agencies and improve our turnaround time for dealer work. And this means better service all around for the state's 5.7 million licensed drivers."

The dealer-only agency will transact initial registrations and title work, and issue temporary and permanent license plates.

The division's four dealer-only agencies were closed two years ago due to budget constraints.

"We're excited to bring back the concept of the dealer-only agency," Lee added. "And, we're confident that this new public/private business partnership will offer quality services to New Jersey motorists."

Preparing to sign an agreement establishing a dealer-only agency are (from left) James V. Tino, Chairman of the New Jersey Auto Dealers Association, Attorney General Robert J. Del Tufo, Charles Walton, President of the NJADA, and Director Skip Lee.

MVS TALK

For the 12th consecutive year, **Gloria Norman**, Management Operations Analyst 2 at the Telephone Center, and her husband, Ron, donned Santa Claus costumes to listen to the holiday wishes of area children.

Before reaching the Norman home, the small visitors approached a wishing well that the couple set up. It held donations to the Bucks County Boy Scout Council. Taking a few steps further, the children looked through a picture window to see a Dickensian village with two miniature trains. It's a lot of work, but the Normans and the children enjoy it.

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Congratulations to Debra and **John Sparano** on the birth of their first child, Jessica Ann Sparano, on September 24. She weighed six pounds, 15 ounces. John is Supervisor 2 in Central Services. Debra is employed at the Division of Pensions.

• • •

A marriage made at MVS -- **Margo Miller**, Field Monitor 1 in the Central Regional Office, and **Kevin Mattis**, Safety Specialist 1 at the Flemington Inspection Station, were married October 10 in St. Anthony's Church, Trenton. The couple honeymooned in Fort Myers Beach, FL.

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Instead of exchanging Christmas gifts, a group of MVS employees donated $505 to the Pediatric Aids Foundation in Santa Monica, CA. The organization was selected because of its important contribution to the research of HIV/AIDS in children. Thanks to everyone who made the charity drive a success.

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About 60 people attended a breakfast ceremony last month in the break room of the Telephone Center to unveil a plaque in memory of **Gertrude Harris**, who was Supervisor of General Information at the Phone Center before her death October 29, 1992. Mrs. Harris had been a Phone Center employee 11 years, and passed away just before the center moved into the new headquarters building. Attending the ceremony were her husband, Faydo, and two sons, Richard and Michael.

Employees honored for dedicated service and . . .

Perry Bascou

Perry Bascou, Supervisor 3 at the Deptford Inspection Station, was honored by Teamsters Local 676 for helping its membership comply with the Commercial Motor Vehicle Safety Act.

The local presented a plaque to Bascou citing his outstanding work between October 1990 and August 1992, when he was assigned to the Cherry Hill CDL Testing Center.

Bascou said he helped a large percentage of the local's 10,000 members, all from South Jersey, obtain their commercial driver licenses, frequently visiting the Teamsters hall in Collingswood on his own time on weekends to update members on CDL procedures.

Perry Bascou (right), Supervisor 3 at the Deptford Inspection Station, accepts a plaque for outstanding CDL service, from Bill Jackson, President of Teamsters Local 676.

The local's plaque reads: "Presented to Perry M. Bascou in grateful appreciation for your outstanding services to the drivers of Local 676, from Teamsters Local 676 and Stewards Club Inc."

"I accepted the plaque on behalf of the staff of the Cherry Hill CDL Center. Without their help, the CDL program wouldn't have been the success it was," Bascou said.

Bascou, who has been an MVS employee since August 1976, also received a lifetime honorary membership in the union.

He transferred to the Deptford Inspection Station from Cherry Hill on August 15, 1992.

Charles Russell Bachman

Charles Russell Bachman, 90 years young, was honored by Motor Vehicle Services with a license plate plaque and a congratulatory letter from Director Skip Lee. His wife, Ruth, received a set of reflectorized plates.

From 1950 to 1970, Charles Bachman served the division as an examiner, first at the Newark Inspection Station, and then at the Morristown Station.

A U.S. Army veteran during the post-World War I era, Bachman currently lives in retirement at his home in Mount Tabor. Born in Newark, he is a life-long resident of New Jersey.

Bachman became an honorary member of the division's Retiree Association, which now comprises approximately 300 members.

In his letter, Director Lee wrote:

"The Division of Motor Vehicles has undergone many challenges and changes since your employment from 1950 to 1970.

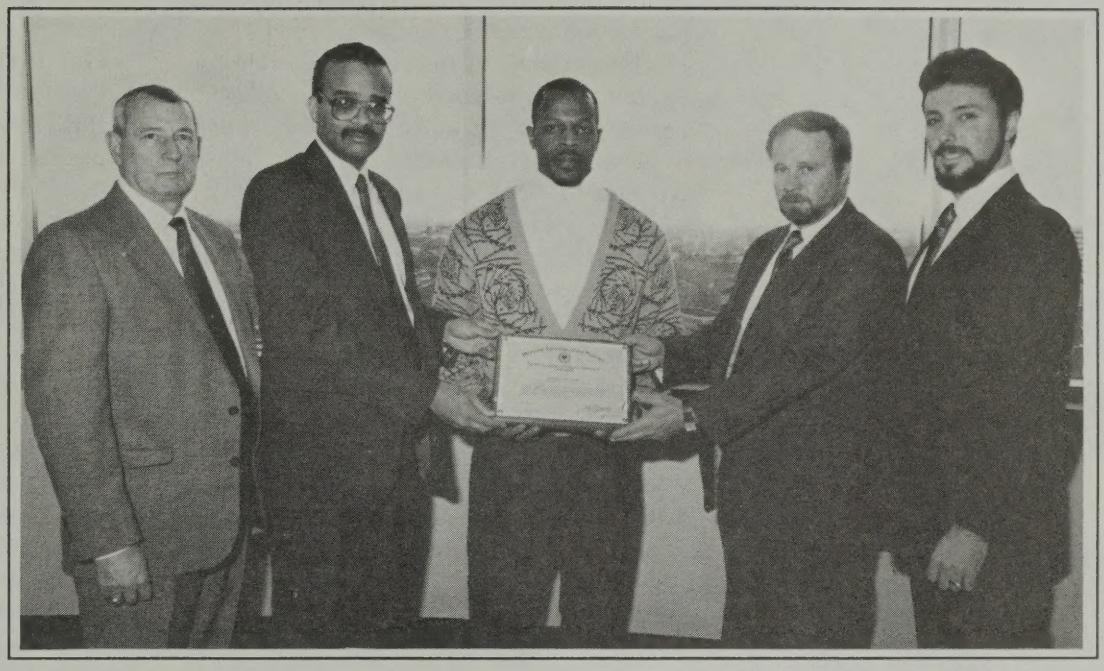
"Former employees, such as yourself, have inspired future generations of vehicle inspection personnel to continue the enhancement of our mission toward serving the motoring public of today.

"It is with great pleasure I congratulate you on your own personal milestone as you celebrate your 90th birthday, and to thank you for providing 20 years of career service as a New Jersey Motor Vehicle Examiner with this division," the letter concluded.

Ed Besko of Employee Services, presents Charles Russell Bachman with a license plate plaque marking his years of service with MVS. Ruth Bachman, left, received a set of reflectorized plates.

Thomas Williams

Thomas Williams, Repairer at the MVS Central Shop, put aside any thoughts of personal danger as he single-handedly chased and caught an attacker and handed him over to the State Police. When he saw the man attack a woman in a ground floor hallway of the Trenton Regional Service Center, Williams took immediate action.



Thomas Williams (center) receives Outstanding Public Service Award from the Defense Investigative Service of the Department of Defense. Representing the Service were George Sloss (second from right), Special Agent in Charge of the Wrightstown field office, and Kevin Crane, Assistant Special Agent. Congratulating Williams were Director Skip Lee and Art Biggs, Manager of Facilities Management.

For his heroism and bravery last June, the Defense Investigative Service of the Department of Defense presented him with its Outstanding Public Service Award. The woman he saved was a special agent doing Defense investigative work at the regional center.

Williams was honored January 15 in the Director's Office by Director Skip Lee, Art Biggs, Manager of Facilities Management, George Sloss, Special Agent in Charge of the Wrightstown field office of the Defense Investigative Service, and Kevin Crane, Assistant Special Agent in Charge.

"Without regard for his personal safety, Mr. Williams chased and held the assailant until the NJ State Police arrived. Mr. Williams displayed great heroism and bravery in this conduct," the award reads.

Williams, who in June 1992 had an office on the ground (basement) floor of the regional center, said he saw the woman special agent get off the elevator and walk past his office. He also noticed a man following her.

He then heard the woman screaming for help, and dashed from his office. As the assailant ran up the stairs to the first floor, Williams chased him outside into the underground parking lot. It was there that Williams grabbed the assailant and pushed him up against a garbage can.

He then returned the attacker to the double doors, brought him inside and forced him to sit on steps until the State Police arrived.

Did he ever think the man might have had a weapon? "I never thought of that. I have two sisters, and I don't want that to happen to anyone," said Williams, who will mark his eighth year at MVS in March.

CARD of THANKS

I cannot adequately put into words my thanks to my fellow employees for the outpouring of support given to me during my illness. It is during times like this when one realizes how special DMV employees really are.

The cards, baskets, and telephone calls really raised my spirits during this trying time, and I thank each and every one of you for your concern and well wishes.

Bob Damiani, Manager
Information Update and Retrieval

Devotion to duty...

This office has had occasion to correspond with you in behalf of constituents from time to time. We also have many dealings with the New Jersey Motor Vehicle Office located in Rte 10, Ledgewood Mall, Ledgewood, NJ 07852. The purpose of this letter is to compliment Ms. Blanche Cantor, your Assistant, who has never failed to provide the help needed with a cheerful, efficient manner.

We also must state that the never-ending compliments for the well run State Motor Vehicle Office in Ledgewood, efficient, courteous treatment afforded by Anthony P. Lombardy and his Team are passed over to you at this Holiday Season. In behalf of Congressman Dean A. Gallo we wish to thank you and your fine Staff.

We recognize that devotion to duty is essential and work must be accomplished but our hearts went out to the State Motor Vehicle Office Staff at Ledgewood who remained at their tasks throughout a horrendous storm. Numerous accidents occurred in this the Northwestern part of Morris County. For this reason our office was closed. Again, we do appreciate the fine service and dedication of your staff. Thank you.

Helen E. Allen
Dover

Outstanding representatives...

I wanted to take this opportunity to introduce myself and thank your staff at the Trenton Regional Service Center for the excellent service they provided me on my recent visits.

As Automotive Instructor for the Gas Business Unit of PSE&G, one of my responsibilities is to train our employees to qualify for Commercial Drivers License (CDL). Prior to the changes in the Division of Motor Vehicles, which resulted in the closing of the Quakerbridge facility, I used that location to have employees tested and to get answers to questions. I developed an outstanding working relationship with the staff at Quakerbridge, one I wasn't sure could be duplicated.

I want you to know I was mistaken. The service provided and the answers to any questions by members of your staff were excellent. Kathy Lamberti, Janie Butler and Regina Bertrano were very professional and pleasant. They are very knowledgeable and outstanding representatives of the Division of Motor Vehicles. I wanted to let you know how fortunate you are to have employees of their caliber. I look forward to any future dealings with your staff and an opportunity to meet with you.

William Gourley
Edison

Good service...

Too often in this busy world, and at this busy time, we are quick to criticize but fail to point out good service.

On Wednesday, December 16th my daughter Stacy turned seventeen. As most parents do on a child's seventeenth birthday, I took my daughter for her driver's test. We were anxious and a bit early for her 8:30 appointment. The examiner suggested I wait inside while he took my daughter for the test.

After that we went to the DMV agency on Route 28 in Dunellen. We expected the worse, but were pleasantly surprised. Mrs. Eleanore Luckas politely explained the forms to be filled out and instructed her to bring them back directly to her upon completion. The entire processing time was at the most thirty minutes.

I know you are very busy with your move, but perhaps you can find the time to pass my appreciation on to these people of your organization.

James E. Birdsall
Somerset

***TALE** LITE*

Jim Florio, Governor
Robert J. Del Tufo, Attorney General
Skip Lee, Director, Motor Vehicle Services

TALE LITE Staff: Letitia Cackowsky, Toni Haney, Edyth Hetman, Debbi Hutton, George Robinson, Maureen Sczpanski and Katherine Ziolkowski. Printed at the Motor Vehicle Services Print Shop.

Employees are invited to share their newsworthy stories, opinions and ideas by calling 609-292-6908, by mailing them to the Communications Office, CN 164, Trenton, NJ 08666, or by coming in person to the 9th floor - West, 225 E. State St., Trenton, NJ.

LAPS
Department of Law and Public Safety
Division of Motor Vehicles